

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 04188 142132Z
ACTION ARA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 4188

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, PINT, ES, HO
SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER OF EL SALVADOR COMMENTS ON PROSPECTS
FOR SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES WITH HONDURAS

REF SAN SALVADOR 4119

1. IN ANTICIPATION OF THE AUGUST 14 ARRIVAL OF PERU'S
DR. JOSE LUIS BUSTAMANTE Y RIVERO AS MEDIATOR IN THE
SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND
HONDURAS, I SPOKE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RODRIGUEZ PORTH
ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, AND SOUGHT HIS EVALUATION OF
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, THE PRESENT STATE OF PLAY, AND
PROSPECTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEDIATION.

2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS CAN BE SUMMARIZED
AS FOLLOWS:
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PAGE 02 SAN SA 04188 142132Z

A. THE GOES SHARES THE USG POINT OF VIEW THAT
THE CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP IN HONDURAS FALLS SHORT OF A
CHANGE IN THE GOVERNING INSTITUTION OF THAT COUNTRY AND
THEREFORE DOES NOT REQUIRE A SPECIFIC ACT OF RECOGNITION
OF RESTORATION OF RELATIONS.

B. EL SALVADOR HOPES FOR CONTINUED AND UNHAMPERED
PROGRESS TOWARD AN EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE DIFFERENCES

WITH HONDURAS.

C. GOES IS BECOMING APPREHENSIVE, HOWEVER, THAT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN HONDURAS MAY BE LESS THAN ENCOURAGING. GOES WONDERS IF GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES IN THAT COUNTRY MAY HAVE SPRUNG IN PART FROM SPECIFIC DESIRE TO SEPARATE CESAR BATRES FROM HIS ROLE AS PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN IN NEGOTIATIONS.

D. IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT ACCESSION TO POWER IN HONDURAS OF GENERAL POLICARPO PAZ GARCIA WILL NOT BE A NEGATIVE FACTOR WITH RESPECT TO SETTLEMENT PROSPECTS. HE HAS NEVER ATTENDED NEGOTIATING SESSIONS AND COULD

REPRESENT A NEW AND FORBIDDING PERSONALITY ON THAT SCENE. ON BALANCE, FONMIN SAID HE WAS APPREHENSIVE THAT THERE MAY BE A "HARDENING" OF THE HONDURAN NEGOTIATING POSITION.

E. IT IS INACCURATE TO SEE GOES POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS AS ONE OF FAVORING SETTLEMENT OF ALL OTHER ISSUES WHILE LEAVING DELINEATION OF THE BORDER TO SOME INDEFINITE FUTURE TIME. INSTEAD, SAID FONMIN, WE WOULD HOPE TO RESOLVE AT ONCE SUCH MATTERS AS FORMALIZED RENUNCIATION OF WAR CLAIMS, RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR RELATIONS, "REINTEGRATION" OF CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET, FREE TRANSIT ACROSS BORDER, ETC., ON ALL OF WHICH AGREEMENT SEEMS CLOSE AT HAND. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SAN SA 04188 142132Z

WITH RESPECT TO DEFINITIVE DEMARKATION OF THE BORDER, THIS IS ADMITTEDLY MORE DIFFICULT. GOES FAVORS CREATION OF A MIXED COMMISSION, STUDY OF THE BORDER PROBLEM BY SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIFIC TIME LIMIT FOR THE MIXED COMMISSION TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION. IF THE TIME LIMIT EXPIRES WITHOUT A SOLUTION, THE CASE WOULD THEN BE REFERRED TO AN INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR DECISION.

3. IN WINDING UP THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION, I INVITED TO FONMINS ATTENTION PRESEIDENT CARTER'S JUNE 21 SPEECH TO OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN PARTICULAR HIS EMPHASIS ON IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES IN THIS HEMISPHERE THROUGH DISCUSSION AMONG THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND OUR READINESS TO BE HELPFUL ALONG WITH OTHER NATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN TRYING TO RESOLVE SUCH DISPUTES. I ASKED IF THERE WERE SOME WAY IN WHICH WE COULD BE HELPFUL AT THE PRESENT TIME. FONMIN SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT SPEECH WITH INTEREST AND UNDERSTOOD PRESIDENT CARTER TO BE OFFERING PANAMA CANAL TREATIES AS AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

BY PATIENT AND PERSERVERING DISCUSSIONS AMONG THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN A PARTICULAR DISPUTE. IN EVERY CASE, HE SAID, INCLUDING THE EL SALVADOR-HONDURAS DISPUTE, EACH SIDE HAS TO CEDE COMETHING. HE THANKED ME FOR MY OFFER TO BE OF ASSISTANCE AND SAID THAT PERHAPS THIS WAS SOMETHING WE COULD DISCUSS IN THE LIGHT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.

4. OTHER ASPECTS OF CONVERSATION BEING REPORTED SEPTEL. DEVINE

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